



SC Department of Employment and Workforce
NEWS RELEASE

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S.C. Students Recognized for Workforce Readiness Skills at Annual Event

More than 550 high school students from across the Palmetto State recently spent the day demonstrating they are ready to succeed in the work place.

As part of the annual Jobs for America's Graduates –South Carolina (JAG-SC) Career Development Conference held March 25 in West Columbia, students delivered public speeches, honed their interviewing skills and competed in team challenges.

JAG-SC, coordinated by the SC Department of Employment and Workforce, is a dropout prevention program focused on helping at-risk students achieve academic success, graduate from high school and improve career readiness.

“This program has delivered proven results in increasing graduation rates and helping students forge successful lives after high school,” said Elaine Midkiff, state coordinator of the JAG-SC program for DEW. “The annual conference always provides a wonderful opportunity to get to know the young people and their mentors as well as experience all the hard work and commitment that goes into making this worthwhile program such a success across South Carolina.”

At the fifth annual conference, students from 24 high schools showed off the knowledge and expertise they've acquired throughout their time in the program.

For example, in the team challenge, four-member groups competed against each other in a Jeopardy!-style match that posed work-related questions such as “What is another way to describe take-home pay?” and “What is the term for the message your physical movements send in a job interview?”

The teams quickly buzzed in with answers “net pay” and “body language.” South Florence High was the day's team champion answering the most correct questions.

South Florence High also was named the State Champion School, meaning it received the most points throughout the overall competition.

The 2011 Governor's Award, given to a top JAG-SC student, went to South Florence High senior MaLeak'a Ham, who has participated in the program for three years. Ham entered the program with a record of 33 days absent from school, six suspensions and a 1.42 grade point average.

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She has reduced absenteeism to six days, has no suspensions and is on target to graduate in June. She has performed 98 community service hours, and her goal is to become a Career Seaman with the Navy while attending college to major in Psychology.

A complete list of award winners is attached.

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2011 Jobs for America's Graduates-South Carolina Awards

Recognition Awards

2011 Governor's Award: MaLeak'a Ham, South Florence High School

2011 Golden Key Award Recipient: Denise Clark, Platinum Express on behalf of Lake Marion High School

2011 Director of Employment and Workforce Award Recipients: Shaheem Joyner, Berkeley High School; Jason Garcia, C.A. Johnson High School; James Miller, Chesnee High School; Freddricka Pressley, Creek Bridge High School; Tyrell Sutton, Darlington High School; Diamond Ricketts, Lake Marion High School; Phillip Stevens, Lancaster High School; SiQuena Witherspoon, Manning High School; Bionca Tennant, McCormick High School; Michael "BJ" Godbolt, Mullins High School; Donna Foreman, Rock Hill High School; Maleak'a Ham, South Florence High School; Devona Sutton, Swansea High School; Charles Scott, Timmonsville High School; Desmond Williams, Wade Hampton High School, Bernard McDaniel Jr., West Florence High School, Shaquel Dials, Wilson High School, and Darius Barton, Woodmont High School.

Competitive Events

State Champion School: South Florence High School, first place; Wade Hampton High School, second place; Lake Marion High School, third place


Career Association Chapter Display of the Year: South Florence High School, first place; Manning High School, second place; Chesnee High School, third place

Employability Skills (Interviewing) Event: Georquel Goodwin, Lake Marion High School, first place; Robert Kane, Chesnee High School, second place; Amisha Wilson, West Florence High School, third place.

Decision Making Event: Justin Griffin, Woodmont High School, first place; Lamonte Rose, Colleton County High School, second place; Alexis Eadie, Berkeley High School, third place.

Public Speaking Event (Topic: "Mission Possible"): Trey Sanders, Wade Hampton High School, first place; Felecia Blackwell, Manning High School, second place; Jakira Forman, Swansea High School, third place.

Telephone Techniques Event: Heather Owens, Mullins High School, first place; Jerica Wilson, Lake Marion High School, second place; Jasmine McCoy, South Florence High School, third place.



Words in the Workplace Event: Kaylaah Upchurch, Rock Hill High School, first place; Mi' Asia Scretchen, Wilson High School, second place; Takayah Singleton, Wade Hampton High School, third place.

Team Challenge Event: South Florence High School, first place; Rock Hill High School, second place; Timmons ville High School, third place.

Pre-judged Competitive Events

Career Association Chapter Manual of the Year: Swansea High School, first place; Wade Hampton High School, second place; Lake Marion High School, third place.

Theme Essay (Topic: “Mission Possible”): MaLeak’a Ham, South Florence High School, first place; Destiny Bearden, Swansea High School and Desmond Williams, Wade Hampton High School, tie for second place; Symone Johnson, Lake Marion High School, third place.

Theme Poster: Carolina Martinez-Cabrera, Lancaster High School, first place; Arie Davis, Creek Bridge High School, second place; Jesse Robinson, South Florence High School, third place; Ariel Black, West Florence High School and Octavia Bryant, Wade Hampton High School, honorable mentions.